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Sketches of American Life.

THE WOODS OF FLORIDA.

* * * In the cool of the evening I have John caught and saddled; no horse knows his own good better; he comes regularly home at meal-time, stray which way he will in these unknown woods; if he has the slightest idea that you are lost when on his back in the wilderness, if you give him the rein he will coolly and dispassionately (and with the greatest effort to avoid giving offence) carry you round in a semicircle till he faces home, and then take that direction.

Riding into the camp on lovely evenings, hearing the click of a rifle lock, he will stop suddenly (for he was wounded once by an Indian bullet), prick his ears, stop, alter his pace, or keep a thoughtful look-out ahead and around him. Through these shades, a world in age, we gallop oftentimes to disturb the stillness about us: if we halt suddenly not a leaf stirs in the mighty woods, not a whisper or the slightest sound will betoken that around us vegetable and animal life is still ceaselessly progressing; through the long vistas of the pines, shooting up to the height of eighty feet without a branch, not a living thing is in motion; your horse like yourself, with head erect and ears pricked to catch the slightest breath of sound, will pause, like Wordsworth's Spirit of Solitude, feeling that "silence in such place is best—the most affecting eloquence." In resting for some minutes, the first sound you will hear will be the breeze coming, but afar off and rustling the tops of the pines; nothing can more exactly resemble the sound of waves on the beach at the distance of two or three miles; for many minutes before it reaches you this breeze will be heard, the pines grow so thickly that it will not rustle the herbage beneath them, but their tops will bend and waver in the wind, and after it has passed silence again resumes her sway, perhaps not for hours again to be broken. The leaves of the pine, unlike those of the oak, maple, and nearly all forest trees, never rustle, and even in a steady breeze emit but a feeble sound; they consist of slender spicules projected from a small sheath, and so arranged as to touch each other only at their extremities; and being evergreen, their pliancy and smoothness is such as to cause them to give out but a feeble sound even in a high wind.

Far away in the depths of these woods I have lived for months: no expanse of waters can surpass their beauty in the sea of herbage presented to the view on reaching some elevation where a vast extent of level forest is spread out before you. In a distance of twenty miles there will not be the variation of as many feet on the green surface of the pine barren; on this the Pine tree grows, probably averaging one tree to every corner of eight square yards; it reaches the height of 100 feet, its texture is more firm, is much more saturated by oily matter, and is heavier than the white mountain pine of the North. Nearly every part of it will sink in water. To procure the crude and impure turpentine from the

tree, a slab of the wood about two inches thick, five or six broad, and four or five long, is cut from the side of the living trunk, a small trench is then hewed in the lower part, and the crude turpentine oozes from the raw surface, and is received into this. This pine overshadows more of the Territory of the United States than any other vegetable production; the herbage beneath consists of small shrubs and grasses, but the chief plant is the palmetto. In a fallen pine I measured on the Santa Fee, the first branch or twig given off from the parent stem was 145 feet from the ground; the tree was as straight as a line; its whole height 198 feet, its diameter a foot from the ground was thirty-three inches, and where the branch sprouted from it twelve inches; it was distinguished in nothing, that I could observe, in comparison with many trees about it; I measured it because it was convenient to do so, as it had been recently blown down, probably having attained its full growth, for the pine, comparatively, is not a long liver. I have counted 150 rings in the trunk, but I think the average age of the tree is not more than a hundred years: its decomposition, owing to the great amount of oily matter with which it is impregnated, is very slow. The black pine knots so often seen in the woods of Florida, which have been charred by fire that has driven into the heart of the knot all its resinous principles, might remain for centuries without decomposing. It is difficult to estimate the height of the pine by the eye; its slender proportions taper up so gently, and it suffers such a small decrease in its circumference, as it ascends aloft, that, looking up at it, you will be puzzled to know whether it is fifty feet, or three times that amount in height. I measured a small pine whose extreme height was sixty-seven feet and an inch or two; the trunk proper terminated at sixty-four feet three inches, the diameter at two-thirds of the height was eight and a half inches, the diameter where it was cut three feet from the ground was eleven and a half inches, its diameter half a foot from the ground was sixteen inches, at one-third its height fourteen inches, and at the point where the trunk terminated five inches; its length to first branch was fifty-eight feet nine inches: thus in a distance of sixty-one feet it only suffered a decrease of six and a half inches in its diameter. Pines of this height are often found in clusters through the woods, growing so thickly together that it is tedious to thread your way through them.

On the sides of the most barren and sterile slopes, growing in apparently pure banks of sand, I have found some of the most beautiful and complex productions of nature; a delicate species of the *Cassia* trails out its arms to the distance of several feet from the root; its briars and leaves minutely and exquisitely formed; its stem rising but four or five inches from the ground, the whole being much the most sensitive of any of which I have any knowledge; on the slightest irritation at the root of one of its branches every leaf will collapse, and on touching the extremity of one of its leaves the plants will droop and fall

down for several inches towards the root. It bears a small purple flower, emitting a sweet odor.

Often found almost overshadowing this humble beauty is the gorgeous Passion Flower; it trails over and along the tops of the herbs in its vicinity, and sometimes reaches a great height by climbing aloft on its more lusty neighbors, supporting itself solely by its tendrils. Its splendid and variegated flowers have been wrought by nature in some mood of her wildest fancy; it bears an oval gourd-like fruit, of which the Indians are very fond; but the most singular part of the plant is the astonishing complexity, regularity, and beauty of its petals and stamens; they are arranged with all the artificial nicety of a kaleidoscope picture; I have found them covering the ground in the most remote and lonely situations in the woods, where the chances were that the foot of man had never been before.

In pure sand hillocks the prickly pear puts forth its tuft of yellow blossoms, and bears its beautiful purple fruit pleasant to sight and taste if you can reach it through the hedge thorns by which it is environed. On the banks of streams, or in moist places, or in the black land of the hummock, the yellow jasmine bears a profusion of flowers, scenting the air with its delightful perfume for a hundred yards around. Its stem is wreathed into all conceivable forms, it twists round every plant it meets, inserts itself into its branches, or trails over its top; with a stem as small as a quill near the root, it will sprout out for many yards, supporting a profusion of flowers to the very last twig. In the midst of marshes, where you will not willingly go, grows the *Sarracenia*, the side-saddle flower, its long tubular leaf filled with water, the heart of the flower overshadowed by a vegetable membrane like an umbrella; its bright crimson or yellow flowers attract the eye from afar, and you feel that hands more than human have left their impress thereon.

During a tedious convalescence from a low grade of fever, my short walk of some forty or fifty yards from the encampment was always terminated by a profuse growth of fungi, a species, I think, of *Phyllus*; * this locality (the principal one in the neighborhood) covered a surface of about two hundred square yards; why I should stop in coming to such a spot will be evident to any one acquainted with the vegetable growth in question; there is probably no living vegetable that can and does exhale so disgusting an odor as this fungus. And it is not only in its decay that this odor is exhaled, for as it lasts for only twenty-four or thirty hours, and there is a new growth every morning, the decaying plant is constantly present: neither do I see any reason why this fungus, in its decay, which commences some ten or fifteen hours after it appears above the

* Perfectly round, cup like, pileus nearly always three cleft, of a bright vermilion color, closed at the top, bending round into three pillars or foot stalks, a black thick juice exuding from within, many sieve-like perforations on inner side, pileus closed at top, grows up in a night, 3 to 4 or 5 inches.

ground, may not in a minor degree prove a source of disease. From the potency of the plant at least on the organs of smelling, one might naturally infer that it grew among Milton's

Rocks, caves, lakes, fells, bogs, dens, and shades of death.

This fungus I have never seen in any other part of Florida; here, two or three hundred might be counted immediately around you; assafoetida was a rose to this vegetable—even as I write, thousands of miles away, the recollections of it, weak and languid as I was when tottering forth to breathe the pestiferous air of the sickly encampment, come upon me with its associations, as one of the chiefest scourges of my life; and not for the wealth of the territory thrice told, would I again encounter the deadly miasms that prostrated three out of every five at this camp, and left the men who were reported well, languid, weak, unfit for the slightest exertion, and ready for death to come in the mildest form.

In the marshes along the banks of rivers, and extending back from them, grows the Cypress. If wanting in the delicate proportions of the pine, or the amazing strength and robustness of the live oak, it is certainly the most lofty tree in Florida; it mounts straight as an arrow for upwards of two hundred feet aloft, its slender herbage at the top, naturally of a sombre hue, is made more so by the curtaining of moss that invariably trails from its branches. The cypress is a sombre tree by emblem, position, and appearance; it gives a lethean character to many of the low clear streams of the country winding through these melancholy looking trees, which sprout up often from the water with their expanded roots and abutments of eighty feet in circumference. For that case, the tree having a frail foundation, nature has well provided: what is lost in the firm attachments of the base she gains in its expansion. We follow her in this in many contrivances; a cypress tree growing in water and a hundred feet in height, will have a base of fifty feet in circumference, or its trunk where it touches the water, or earth a few inches below, will have that girth, but the trunk for one fifth its length will be hollow: yet a cypress of the same height a few yards from this one, but on dry land, will have a circumference at its base of only sixteen or eighteen feet, and this base will be perfectly sound. I do not know a more singular instance of a vegetable production changing the mechanical part of its nature to suit the circumstances of its situation, for nothing is lost, the same substances and in the same amount exist in both cases; I measured one of these immense roots or abutments—its continuous surface was ninety-two feet in circumference; that is, it had that rim of bark and sap-wood, as, though the interior was hollow, these immense trunks are veined perpendicularly by deep grooves, as if a series of small trees had been bound together, suggesting the idea of great strength and firmness. It is only when you look aloft and see the towering column of timber that this base has to support, that you feel certain there are no useless expenditures in its breadth and proportions; if the gothic arch was suggested by the intermingling of the branches of the oak, the gothic column was surely wrought from the lower trunk of the cypress. Place it in a more erect position and smoothe the roughness of its surface, and you have the form of the grooved gothic pillar. There is a cypress tree in the Wahoo swamp, well known from its being a landmark, as there are few trees in its vicinity; it is up-

wards of two hundred feet in length. At one hundred feet from the ground it was computed to be eighteen feet in circumference, two or three feet from the ground its solid circumference is thirty-three feet. In riding along through the dry forests you will see a mile off, through the trunks of the trees where no herbage obstructs the view, a thin mist or exhalation apparently; if you have not seen it before you will declare it is the smoke from some dwelling, save that you know no inhabitants are within many miles of you; you approach and behold your course obstructed by a cypress swamp, heavily festooned with moss. You have heard afar off before you approached it the deep trumpet tones of the gigantic cranes, and as you approach them, you see them slowly and heavily getting under weigh, with their long legs dangling beneath until they are fairly aloft and have time to gather all things up into their proper places; you start a deer or two sunning themselves in the palmetto bushes on the edge of the swamp, but are so lost at the gracefully prodigious bounds that these fellows make on being so suddenly disturbed, that you have almost forgotten to let fly a bullet after them; and even then you are reproved, not for firing at the deer, but for making such a noise in the woods; for you have lately passed the small handful of ashes, with the ends of burnt branches placed in a circle and centring therein, that betoken an Indian fire; you have seen the point of a moccasin, too, in the soft sand, and by a species of instinct you keep moving so that you may not present a fixed mark to any unseen rifle in your neighborhood. Now by glimpses through the cypress trunks and moss, a small lake is seen on which the wild ducks are floating silently, and overhead a "Grecian Lady," with an astonishingly long neck, having suddenly become convinced that you are intruders, has taken unto herself wings; if you can reach the lake through the fallen trees, by stepping from one to another of them, a world as populous as that around you is in the water below; you see eighty feet below at its remotest depths schools of fish midway between you and the green vegetation at the bottom; its shores do not shelve off; unlike other lakes, the precipitous limestone rocks abut right upward from its watery foundations, and if you are careful in looking down you will see the vapory wreaths of the water as it gushes out from the crevices. But all above is placid; the giant protectors of the lake have never suffered the winds to visit its face too roughly, human bark has never floated above it, and for aught you know, you may be the first man of your race who has ever looked down into its unliothomed recesses.

Hanging in festoons from nearly every branch of a tree, this moss is to a stranger the most peculiar feature in the scenery of the South. It is a parasite of the most extensive growth and selections; but its principal favorites are the live oak, the cypress, and cedar; the immense cypress trees on the Suwannee are covered so completely with it, that hardly any green vegetation is seen through its dull leaden hue; it occasionally attacks the pine, though that tree is generally more exempt from it than any other. A live oak in spring, when it first puts forth its green leaves, will often be so enveloped with this moss, that its sombre grey will be the only color that at a short distance off is to be seen. Although it makes a decided selection from the forest trees, yet, like all parasites, it clings perseveringly to the tree in decay, or bad health; an old and diseased oak is so covered and bent down, by moss, air plants, polypods, mistletoe, and

many other parasites, that the wonder is how it can sustain life under such an accumulation of ills. Many of these plants draw no nourishment from the tree, but they harass its growth, and oppress and drag down its branches and trunk by their weight; while others, and especially the delicate fern-like plants with which the trunk of a leaning oak is covered and made green, depend for much of their sustenance on the juices of the tree, and thus completely impoverish it. I have seen oaks support, I think, fully a ton in weight of this moss; its effects are highly picturesque, and with its pointed growths falling towards the ground, it will make the most indifferent looking oaks beautiful.

The doctrine of the germination by cells, or capsules, will doubtless shed much light on the unexplored regions of vegetable physiology relative to parasitic plants; and it will become a proper question whether the germ of the parasite finds a nest in the oak proper for its development, and in future years propagates itself wholly by its own nourishing power. This, at least, seems to be the way the moss is renewed; a wisp of it of a yard or two in length, hanging from a tree with hundreds of its tendrils green in spring, will, on examination, be found to be interrupted many times, until the attachment of the plant is reached, by old decayed moss, the growth of a former year, evidently dead, transmitting no juices; on which the new growth hangs, totally differing from it in every respect. The plant will grow on trees not congenial to its nature, but it seems to be only an accidental process; in the same way that suspended from the eave of a house it will flourish until its living principle becomes worn out. Half of the lower branches of the oak are covered with this moss growing luxuriantly, but it will be found, on examination, to be merely thrown across the branch. Occasionally vigorous growth will arise from the germ, its attachments strongly encircling the twig it is on, and putting forth its branches in a manner totally different from the secondary growth, or that generated within itself. But it is unnecessary for these plants to depend on other resources than the atmosphere, and its moisture; from the oxygen, carbon, and ammonia therein, they elaborate all the constituents of their growth. I procured a large healthy plant from a tree in Southern Florida, weighing probably three pounds, and hung it from the roof of a porch by a string to its root, in such a way that though the plant looked out on one side to the open air, its young sprout, on which it bears its purple flowers, should face the wall. It soon displayed its instincts; the sprout thus suspended in the air, in the course of two or three weeks, bent round so as to face the light, and as it was unnatural for it to grow downward towards the earth, it made a gentle curve, clearing all its own branches, and sprouted up aloft towards the roof of the porch. In two months this sprout, sustained alone by the atmosphere and its adjuncts, had grown to the length of thirty-one inches by a little more than half an inch in diameter; it put forth its buds for flowering, but something suddenly injured it, or was wanting or checked its growth, for from that time it drooped and died; I never watered it, but in the morning large beads of moisture would be precipitated from the atmosphere on its cool leaf.

The myrtle leaf is not unlike that of the live oak; it is smaller and more delicate, but the figure and color are nearly the same. There all resemblance ceases; the live oak is a giant even among its kind, the iron-knitting of its

frame in the air is scarcely more massive than the firm grasps with which it seizes on the earth. Although it flourishes well in lands much less rich than the hummocks, yet it is in the richest land, provided it is dry and in the neighborhood of the sea, that it attains its largest growths; but this valuable tree is found also far in the interior of the Peninsula; it does not mount high, the tallest oak probably not exceeding a hundred and fifty feet. It is, in the largest species I have seen, from eighteen to twenty-five feet in circumference; but its greatest peculiarity is the astonishing strength and robustness of the branches it gives off; these put forth from the tree almost at right angles to it, and bear such a weight of herbage that you are lost in amazement at the grip that the stem takes of the parent trunk. An iron tree would probably not support a greater weight at arms-length than does the live oak; a straight stick of it without knots cannot be broken directly across its surface; the attachments of its tough fibres will give way, and by their bending the stick is broken, but the long ultimate fibre seems to be untouched: except the *lignum vitæ* and mangrove, it is the heaviest of the Florida woods, and sinks like a stone in water. The foliage of most of the forest trees consists of clumps of leaves so high up in the air that before the shadow reaches the ground it is nearly dispersed, and the shade of the trunk is the only one in which you can rest for a moment with any satisfaction; but in a grove of live oaks, covered with moss, the case is widely different. When at noon-tide, with the heavens unobscured in a hot day, in circles of an acre or two in extent, you will not see a ray of sun-light on the ground, nothing is more delightful than to reach one of these cool retreats, when plodding along through the hot sand and woods in a sultry day. The place is generally low, the sand gives way to a rich sod; and the heavy shadows cast around you always generate a pleasant breeze, that of all things you would wish to have is the most refreshing.

Down by the long shores of these almost tideless seas, and by the margy mouths of their tributary rivers; high up above the marshy vegetation around them grows the *Chamerops Palmetto*, the lofty palm. It ascends in a perfectly circular trunk, scarcely thicker than your thigh, sixty feet into the air; not a twig does it give off until its heavy fronds, or leaves from six to eight feet in length, form at its top a perfectly green globe of foliage. There are no branches, this globe of leaves and the trunk form the whole; so gradually does it taper upwards that the eye fails to detect the diminution in its thickness as it ascends. At the heart of the tree where the leaves are given off, is the soft white core not much unlike the leaves of the cabbage, which is often eaten by the Indians, and in the southern expeditions where food was scarce, was considered quite a delicacy by the soldiers. In consistence and color it resembles the chestnut, and slightly so in taste; its texture is very delicate and tender. The leaves of this palm were much used during the war by the troops in thatching the huts erected at a temporary station or post, the roof remaining good and perfectly water-proof for some years if well bound together in the first instance.

This palm was most abundant on Cedar Keys; along the coast above Key West, were also many trees, and other species. It is the most tropical sight in Florida; seen on a clear, moonlit night, its broad varnished leaves will reflect the light like so many mirrors aloft. "This thy stature is like to a palm tree," said

Solomon; its beautiful proportions, and the grace with which it bends under its crown of foliage, can scarcely be surpassed in the vegetable world; and across the morass a group of royal palms may be seen huddled together like a fair company of graceful girls on some green hillock, seeking relief in companionship from the desolation around.

Three hundred miles northward go we again in imagination to the native ground of another of these beauties among the monarchs: although the *Magnolia* inhabits the whole of Florida, yet its favorite seats seem to be in the northern part of the territory. Every blooming magnolia in colder climates is called the *grandiflora*, but the trees of that name I have seen, have seldom been under one hundred feet in height, and not often, I think, are they housed. If Linnæus gave it so sumptuous a name, in viewing a dried specimen in the cold regions of Sweden, one fails to imagine the delight the naturalist would have felt in seeing this flower aloft in the wild woods, where there was no hand but nature's to tend it or pluck its glories. Gathering up some remnants of tender thoughts, nearly all dispersed by the homely truths of the life you lead in a wilderness, you sigh to think your horse's head the only one that can be adorned by the superb flower, as you guide him gently beneath the low branching limbs, yourself bending down on his neck that you may get into the thick of these embosomed beauties; nothing loath, he will rest in the cool shade with the bridle-rein loose, until you have gathered your fill of the snowy and solitary flowers, now within handgrasp of you, and looking back as you leave the blooming tree, you see them in the richest contrast with the deep verdure of the leaves, high up to the very spire.

This loftiest of the magnolias does not, I think, grow north of Georgia, though there are several species of the tree that inhabit colder latitudes; its leaf is thick, and on its upper surface of a beautiful, smooth, glossy, green color, and from one to two feet in length; another species has a leaf not much smaller than the palm, sometimes reaching for three and four feet; it is a very straight tree, and puts forth its branches almost at right angles to the trunk. Many of the gushing springs of Florida replenish this tree, and many of these "springs of life" are there that the Spaniards heard of in Cuba, and invaded the country for the mere purpose of finding; in fact, the story is told at nearly every one of them, that *this* is the genuine fountain that Ponce de Leon was after, led by the sickly caprice of old age and disease. Among the many candidates for this honor, with whom I have become acquainted, I give in my adhesion to the one that bubbles up from the shelving slope of a steep bluff, on the top of which the house of its owner is perched; it is near Newnansville; it is a fresh and sparkling water, with a most decidedly sulphurous smell and taste, however; the adjacent log dwelling is right above it, the porch jutting over the declivity, and walled up to the height of four or five feet with thick boards, as a protection to any shots fired at the inmates from the plain below. Here the wife and daughter, a pretty, modest girl, were sitting knitting in the heat of the day, as we entered; the view from here extended over the tops of the pines for a long distance. Its owner, with the faith that of right belongs to all nauseous tasting springs, assured us that his was "of the worthiest," and explained to us how he intended to cut long, broad avenues through the trees, in all directions from the house, and build a flight of steps to run spirally down to his

spring, and have a large bathing house elegantly arranged; all he wanted, he said, was some one to "crack" the spring, which observing we did not comprehend he explained, "to praise in the newspapers." Yet he had been driven from this wild household some short time before by the Indians, and even now occupied it in terror; we were scouting with a guard of twelve men, and the week before our visit two persons had been shot in the plain below the house, and within rifle sound of his porch. I envied this old man his daughter more than his spring: she was neither a lady nor a lily, for she both toiled and spun; but we left her, lamenting that the lot of the gentle and modest girl who had set the board for us should be cast in such an inhospitable wilderness.

Pass we once more in an eagle's flight four hundred miles southward in a straight line, until we alight on one of the skirting islands of these southern seas. The chances are that beneath us we have not seen the hand of man impressed on an acre of the soil in this long flight; sand hillocks, sand plains, pine tops, bogs, everglades, and water, have varied the prospect, and wearied with the scene we will alight on an island of verdure in eye-sight, off the main land of the southern coast of Florida.

Along the edge of this, some fisherman's hand has pierced the soil, and let fall into it the long and bulbous-like stalk of the banana and plantain; their leaves in the second summer (if all is not summer that is here), have sprung forth already formed as they were rolled up in their long receptacles, and their glossy velvet like coats, unable to support their own weight, have drooped, even in the shade that is cast over them by the mangrove and *lignum vitæ* trees that cover nearly all the island. A strange antediluvian-like track is seen from the water's edge, up over the sandy mound of the beach: we trace it and behold no bird's nest, though there is a basket of eggs there, and for the first time in our lives we are struck with the startling absurdity of a green turtle laying eggs. Probably no animal in the world has in other respects less of the bird in his nature.

Around in a cove of the island, the sole inhabitant of the soil, alone and without wife or children, the fisherman has built him a rough palmetto shed; but the whole dwelling consists of a roof sloping towards the stormy side, the single mast of his light sloop vibrates within whispering distance of the shore; in the offing the wrecker scuds fiercely along, and off at sea, apparently motionless, are white sails between you and the horizon.

This is the picture of nearly all the islands on the southern shores of Florida. In approaching some of them, however, no beach can be seen, they are engirdled and overtopped by verdure; the dwarf mangroves, with their roots shooting up to join the tree at half its height, to afford it a firmer base in a shallow soil, grow within reach of the tide; an entangled mass of vines and bushes, that a bird could not penetrate, succeeds to these, and the gentle ascents of the island, if such they can be called, that are but a few feet above the sea and shelving from the centre down to it, are heavily wooded by the live oak, cedar, gum, mangrove, and other trees.

North of these islands, on what is called the main land of Florida, the wiry grass of the Everglades sweeps over a Territory of many miles in extent; occasionally, far off like beacons on some solitary rock at sea, a few lonely cypress or pine trees have found a fast hold in the bed of sand of a few roads in circuit just upheaved above the level of the

water. For miles before you approach them they serve as guides to the wearied helmsman in your canoe; and cautiously has he to take their bearings, for he will burst at times into the cleared ponds of water, where the thick grass around him encroaches so closely, that he can only look overhead at the sun, or moon, or at his compass for his guide.

To the right, northward on the St. John's river, the indigenous groves of the bitter sweet orange scent the whole air for many months of spring and summer; no tree with a deeper verdure or sweeter flower than this, its rich green leaf even sheds a delicious aromatic perfume, and it carries its golden fruit for nine months in the year; it is found by the shores of lakes, or the rich banks of rivers or springs; like most of the native trees of the country it does not grow alone, but with many of its kind, probably half encircling a clear shallow series of pools or springs, on which the large globular white water nymph floats at ease, with her shield-like leaf spread upon the water, but safe anchored below.

R. S. H.

St. Louis, Mo., Jan., 1848.

Reviews.

A Discourse delivered before the New England Society, in the City of New York, December 22, 1847. By J. Prescott Hall.

THAT was a glorious fragment of the English race, which splintered off from the Parent stock to plant itself in New England. Energy, enterprise, concerted action, were pre-eminently their characteristics; and these they have bequeathed to their descendants wherever we find them. Hence, too, the noble provision they made for education almost ere they had a shelter over their heads in their new home, a provision still first cared for by the most needy of those who claim a New England ancestry. In some few respects, indeed, those brave and resolute and intellectually aspiring men were far behind the spirit of the age in which they lived; and this backwardness prevented them from bringing to the shores of New England the religious toleration by which they lived surrounded for twelve years in Holland. But they brought with them an onward spirit destined soon to carry them beyond the American colonists from Holland; a spirit of earnest improvement and incessant development, which enabled the New Englander, when he had overtaken his predecessor in the race of freedom, to give a reason for the faith that was in him; a spirit of intelligence and omnipresent activity which since then has placed him everywhere in the front rank of American communities, and almost made the story of his ancestors the story of a nation; albeit (so far as this State at least is concerned) the theory of our present system of freedom, religion, and civilization, was already in process of evolution upon the soil of New York, before the Pilgrim band ever touched the rock of Plymouth. (See Gouverneur Morris's discourse before the N. Y. Hist. Soc., 1811.) Well then may the New Englander reverence his forefathers; those forefathers who transmitted to him that love of enlightenment which ensured his broadening the platform of their faith, whether religious or political; who transmitted to him withal, those fibrous traits of character which give the best warrant that the essential qualities of the man will sustain his mental superstructure.

Mr. Hall takes this memorable Pilgrim band of New England's forefathers, even as the self-exiled Puritans landed at New Plymouth, and

urges with great learning and eloquence how faithfully they represented the best traits of the English race when in its prime, and how reverently New Englanders should honor the memory of their ancestry. We need not commend the following flowing passages to our readers:—

"It will be observed here, with what natural simplicity they [the Pilgrims] describe their feelings and disclose their motives of action; and among them, one, not the least observable, is their love of home, language, and country! That mysterious tie, which binds men to the land of their birth; that innate sympathy with the accents of our early days, which neither time nor distance can destroy; that yearning after kindred associations, which will not be denied; that home-sickness of the heart, when banished from the scenes of its youth and affections, which not even the great Roman orator could endure; these, all these, are most observable in the character and feelings of our ancestors.

"They lived in Holland, 'as men in exile and in a poor condition.' But they seem to have felt as if their banishment were removed, if again they could be placed in connexion with their native country, and under the protection of its power. On those western shores, to which they had turned their eyes, they would be objects of solicitude to their distant friends and relatives. Subjects of the same king, obedient to the same parliament, they would be Englishmen still, though Englishmen in a distant land. Their habitations might indeed be changed, but their country would remain the same. Exiles no more, for they were a part of the British Empire; and the flag which floated over their heads was the same banner which had waved on the fields of their fathers' fame. 'May not,' exclaims Governor Bradford, 'and ought not, the children of these fathers rightly say, 'our fathers were Englishmen which came over the great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness.'"

"Our ancestors were proud of their nation, and they could not suffer the ties which bound them to the spot where they were born to be entirely severed. Englishmen by birth; Englishmen they would live and die. The sun, when he rose, came from their native land, and had warmed its soil by his early beams. The stars of night had been gazed upon by them under the broad canopy of heaven, while standing by the doors of their fathers; and their relatives and friends in a far-distant land, would breathe a prayer for their safety and success as members still of the same great family; and thus their nationality itself would be preserved.

"Then again, the language of their youth would not be forgotten or lost, but would be preserved and extended far and wide, over new and boundless regions; and this, too, was a matter of pleasing anxiety to them.

"And which of us of New England origin, now here assembled, is there, who is not ready to thank those wise and thoughtful men, for the great gift of that noble tongue, in which our mothers first taught us to speak? Who would not lament if it had been confounded and lost in the hard jargon of Holland? Who would alter it, that he might 'babble a dialect of France?' Who would change its terse and manly accents for the soft voice of Italy, or the sonorous periods of Spain? No; if we—

"Would delight our private hours
With music or with poem, where so soon
As in our native language, can we find
That solace?"

"Language of Shakspeare and of Milton! Language of the Pilgrims! Having sounded its loud alarms in the great cause of freedom on its native shores, from the tongues of Burke, of Fox, and of Chatham, it has been echoed across the Atlantic and poured out in thunders from the lips of Webster, of Clay, and Calhoun! Language of free-born men! It has fixed its abode upon this western continent, here to remain, and

advance, and spread out, until its voice shall have been heard in every valley and on every hill top, between the rising and the setting sun. Nor shall its sounds cease to echo and vibrate in its new abode, while man shall retain the power of self-government, and the love of liberty be cherished in his bosom.

"Observe, also, the great forecast of our ancestors in their anxiety to give their children that education which should fit them to be Englishmen, speaking the English language, protected by English laws, and enjoying English liberty. All these were precious in their eyes; and if they could have but one privilege more, the liberty of enjoying the forms of their own religion in their own way; then, though seas were put between them and their native land, they were no longer exiles, no longer wanderers without a home, without a country."

This is finely said; we respond earnestly to the feeling here invoked, and, albeit the blended lineage of New York looks not to England, but to the soil of our ancient State, for its ancestry of many races, yet the spirit of the New England orator's remarks must be responded to by the most pertinacious Knickerbockers.

But Mr. Hall's discourse does not consist only of eloquent declamation; he gives us a most interesting historical sketch of the early notions and movements of the planters of New England, and meets many allegations which are made against them in a manner that will be conclusive with many, however tenacious some may be of their entire discrepancy with his views.

The following portion of his argument will, we think, meet in the main the acceptance of every candid mind:—

"It has often been made a subject of reproach upon our ancestors, that having left their own country for the sake of religious freedom, and the enjoyment of the rights of conscience unshackled and uncontrolled, they did nevertheless become themselves intolerant, the moment they were in possession of a country with their own supremacy firmly established; that they were narrow in their notions, selfish in their designs, exclusive in their purposes, and tyrannical in their acts; willing to become the subjects and objects of universal religious emancipation themselves, but determined, at the same time, to subdue all others to their opinions.

"It seems to me, however, that this is an unfair mode of stating the case. The original settlers did not visit the inhospitable shores of New England for any objects of universal toleration; nor for the purpose of allowing men of all religions, and no religion, an opportunity of planting their errors, or disseminating their infidelity. No! Far different from this were the purposes and objects of those religious wanderers; who, if misguided in their notions, and over scrupulous in their faith, were nevertheless sincere, devout, and upright. With them religious faith was a principle. It was a guide to their actions, a rule for their conduct, and a law for their government; the 'be all and the end all' of their objects in this world, and of their hope in that which is to come.

"What if they were misguided? What if they were heated with zeal? What if they were exclusive in their opinions, stern in their judgments, and unyielding in their purposes? Were they not actuated by the purest and the holiest motives that ever filled or agitated the breast of men? Had they not left the consolations of home, of kindred, and of country, for the express purpose of worshipping God in the wilderness in their own way? Seeking no associations with those who entertained different opinions; asking no favor, requiring no aid or comfort, except from Him who saw their hearts, and knew that they were upright and pure? It may be, that in their peculiar notions in relation to religious government they were misguided;

and as a rule of civil action we now all believe that each creed, and every religion, should be permitted to exist by its own inherent truth, uncontrolled by human laws, unprotected by political favor, untrammelled by worldly device.

"But believe me, gentlemen of New England, this doctrine so free, so liberal, so republican, so just itself, so necessary to our institutions, did not originate in minds filled with the ardor of that faith which sees but one object, and that object under but one form and pressure. Oh, no! The most tolerant man was not, I think, originally the most devout man, although he might have been sincere. No! His lips were not touched as with a live coal from the altar, who first proclaimed that there were no differences to be regarded amongst men in their various creeds. Our fathers cherished their faith as the immortal principle which causes men to feel the necessity of another existence, and to yearn after it, with that overflowing of spirit which gives evidence of the full heart and the contrite soul.

"But I am ready to maintain that the original settlers of New England were not even intolerant, in the correct sense of that term, when we understand their purposes and examine their actions. That the congregation of Mr. Robinson did not desire to associate in civil government with Arians and ranters, with papists and infidels, may be true enough; and why should they not be permitted to worship God by themselves, in their own way, undisturbed by conflicting opinions, unheated by argument, unswayed by opposite practice? They sought not to make converts of others, excepting the heathen. They interfered with no man's religious belief, unless he thrust himself upon their jurisdiction; and within this pale they had, in my judgment, a perfect right to be exclusive. If there were others who thought that peculiarities of doctrine were not of the essence of faith, the wilderness was open, and they might have followed the examples of the Pilgrims. 'The world was all before them where to choose their place of rest;' and neither Ann Hutchinson, nor Thomas Morton, the disturbing lawyer, nor even Roger Williams himself, had a right to come uncalled for, within the limits of Plymouth or Massachusetts, and then cry out, 'persecution and intolerance.'"

We conceive that Mr. Hall has in these passages placed the early action of New England society on the only strong, the only true ground. And we rejoice that he has done so, for the real character of the Pilgrims is becoming frittered away by ascribing to them views of toleration which were not theirs; and inviting an irritating examination into claims which inconsiderate people incessantly put forth for them, as having originated the free spirit of other American communities, whose law of development has been totally different from that of New England.

We hope yet to see the day when every other section of the Union will have its annals yearly illustrated by kindred ability to that which marks the discourses before the New England Society. For the middle section of the old States, or at least, for New Jersey and New York, the landing of Hendrick Hudson marks an era which should never be forgotten by all who have been benefited by his discoveries: and gladly would we see the day when the memorable Fourth of September, 1609, will be commemorated by the varied population of New York, with the same spirit that New England keeps her first historical record ever fresh in the hearts of her sons. The real value of these anniversary celebrations must be appreciated by every one who remembers that it is by similar commemorations of the era of our Independence, that a partial knowledge of our country's story is chiefly disseminated among

our vast immigrant population, while its associations are kept ever fresh among the multitude generally. Did every State in the Union commemorate the era of its origin by an annual discourse, nothing could tend more to promote an enlightened patriotism. It would teach us at least to take our reckoning upon the voyage of Progress, by throwing the stern lights of experience over the waste of years we have traversed. It would enable us to study to some purpose the Philosophy of Society, as society has gradually developed itself in new communities; packed away into the log-hut at their inception, and expanding in a few years into squares of brick mansions, columned churches, and academies of painted shingle.

But there is something higher than "your philosophy" to be ministered to by these reverential tributes to the founders of one's country. Amid the babel confusion of the new theories which are daily put forth as to "the nature and wants of man as a social being," it is a refreshing and a wholesome exercise to come back, once a year, to the mere instincts of whose existence we have some degree of assurance as tolerably certain—if anything has yet been proved to be certain in the human mind.

"A poor thing, sir—but mine own,"

quoit Touchstone; and the feeling of Shakespeare's clown is the feeling of every unperverted man about his country. It is to the soil whence he drew his earliest breath, that he loves to look for the elements of worth. Not less happy is New England in the objects themselves, than the talent to illustrate, and the spirit to respond to each tribute to her pilgrim worth. We rejoice that her children, wherever they may be, cherish each memorial of their fathers with such enlightened care, for the sturdy trait gives assurance that their children in turn will identify themselves with the pride and patriotism of the state of their birth, and "stand by their colors," with a zeal equally effectual and honorable. As we have said before, the changes and experiences, the trials and triumphs, the examples of warning, the models for imitation of our widespread American communities, will then be treasured up everywhere with the same wholesome effect, which marks their reverential and intelligent preservation in New England. A people who have no Past and no literature, are but an accident in the annals of mankind, and on the page of history will only be treated as an excrescence among the nations; unless in some new philosophy, railroads and annual elections shall be thought to constitute "a people."

We must not take leave of this learned and eloquent address, without referring to a few passages which may puzzle some other readers as much as they have ourselves.

On page 70, he says:—

"We have thus seen who the first planters of New England were, and the causes which led to the great enterprise of establishing colonies upon our North-Atlantic shores."

And previously:—

"These were the reasons assigned by the Pilgrims themselves for the great and perilous enterprise of *exploring and settling a new world.*" P. 19.

"The abortive attempts to plant in other parts of the country were well known to the Pilgrims." P. 20.

"They obtained from the Virginia Company that patent which furnished the title under which our ancestors undertook the greatest enterprise in the annals of their race." P. 24.

If by the last passage Mr. Hall refers to the English race, he surely must have forgotten the previous settlement of Jamestown; nor could he have reference to that settlement as "abortive" in the third passage; for the ancient colonial seat of Virginia had not yet fallen into ruin at the time the New England settlers arrived. Still less could these claims of first *exploration*, and first successful *settlement*, be intended to strike from American history the ancient New York towns of Albany, Schenectady, and Kingston, whose annals had already begun previous to the era of the Plymouth colony; while the barque *ONRUST* built here, was afloat in the harbor of New York, ere the Pilgrims determined to cross the Atlantic! We presume, therefore, that the principal reference is intended to show previous attempts at settlement in New England, especially those in the present State of Maine, which Mr. Folsom has so ably commemorated; and in this sense the Pilgrim exploration and settlement of the "New World" of New England, must indeed be regarded as the greatest enterprise in the annals of the Puritan race. The greatest—and yet still greater, when we remember what a fragmentary body of the Puritans accomplished in New England, and contrast the impression they have made upon other sections of this Union, with the short-lived political triumphs of the mass of the Puritans which they left behind them in England.

We must not take leave of this well-written and well-received address from one of the most eminent members of the New York bar, without extracting the following emphatic declaration for the benefit of our legal friends:—

"I may here safely assert that many, if not all, the important improvements made in the jurisprudence of New York within the last fifty years, have been *borrowed* from New England, and chiefly from Connecticut."

We have but one comment to make upon the above, and that is that New York may go on "borrowing" for ever from New England, whether it be law, commerce, or literature; but until she can borrow along with them the gallant New England spirit of "standing by your colors," her body politic will be only a great moral corpse galvanized in different members by as many different streams of electric fluid. We have now half a dozen societies in this city, representing as many races, as many distinct national ideas and local influences beyond our own borders. These are ramified through the towns of the State; and in each of them, far and near, there is the most industrious ability displayed periodically to illustrate the deeds of their peculiar race. Now this same untiring energy to exalt "the land we live in," instead of the branch of the human family to which we belong, would give to the STATE a treasure of PUBLIC SPIRIT that would be invaluable.

Nor are associations wanting in which all can participate, whether English, Irish, French, or German, whether Catholic, Puritan, or Jew.

The landing of Hendrick Hudson, an Englishman in Dutch employ, with a crew from every nation, marks the first era of our History; and the immigrant who comes here to settle a thousand years hence will still have reason to hold memorable the date of the 4th of September, 1609. What the landing of Columbus is to the continent, the landing of Hendrick Hudson is to the State of New York. Her whole story radiates from his exploration, and concentrates again upon his memorable enterprise. No change of opinion, of philoso-

phy, of politics, no overturn of present systems of government, no erection of new political fabrics from their ruins, can affect the character of the event or modify the light in which it is to be regarded. It is simply a physical fact in which every inhabitant of New York, of whatever creed or origin, is personally interested, and must continue to be personally interested while the waters of Erie and Champlain flow through the Hudson to the Atlantic. Surely, then, that event is worth commemorating upon the soil of this State as the type of some historical association among us, which is indestructible in its character, and in which all can participate with unanimity.

Truly, an "Excelsior Society," to celebrate some historical event which is the common property of all of her citizens, is needed in this State, if the inhabitants of New York would have an enlightened State pride and State feeling, so constantly invoked in other States, keep pace with the growing wealth and population of this sovereignty. Let the energetic and intelligent young men of the western part of the State institute such associations, and the New England energies, which they inherit, will be sure to establish a common bond of interest, of feeling, of public spirit, through all our borders.

To our distant readers we, perhaps, owe an apology for giving so much space in these latter passages to a theme which is of less universal interest than those we generally attempt to consult in this cosmopolitan journal.

The District School Reader; or, Exercises in Reading and Speaking, for the Highest Classes of Public and Private Schools. By William D. Swan. Philadelphia: Thomas Cowperthwait & Co. 1845.

The Grammar School Reader; consisting of Selections in Prose and Poetry, with Exercises in Articulation. By William D. Swan. Same publishers.

Wilmsen's Reader; or, the Children's Friend. A work which has long held the first rank in the celebrated schools of Prussia. Translated by Wm. Wells. Same publishers.

It is unfortunate that the success of school books in this country is scarcely at all dependent upon their quality and character. A certain degree of industrious and shrewd publishing management seems to be sufficient to secure the sale of any number of editions of a new hash of "Rosa Matildas and Della Cruscas;" and the best book that could be made would stand but little chance of general introduction, without the application of such means. It is a lamentable fact, that in the last half century there has been no improvement in the large class of books devoted to lessons in reading. Murray's English Reader is, at this day, so far as we are aware, the best selection extant. The judicious compilations published a few years ago by Mr. Pierpont, are about the only ones that can be compared with it. The old American Preceptor, Columbian Orator, and Scott's Lessons, are better than most of the volumes which have usurped their places.

One of the most common and most injurious of the mistakes that are made by the editors of this kind of books, arises from an impression that it is necessary to feed the young idea, as well as the tender stomach, with weak food. The sickly sentimentalism of boarding-school misses, and the leisurely speculations of unoccupied tape measurers, seem to be regarded as just the things for "early beginners." Judged by this rule, nothing could be better than three-fourths of the "Readers" with

which the schools are now inundated. But we have no hesitation in saying, that there is not a more pernicious error in the very worst course of study. If there is a time when the most chaste and vigorous style is really indispensable to a pupil, it is when he is first acquiring a taste for reading; when he has just passed the Rubicon of three syllables. And there is no danger, that a child who has reached this point, will ever be at any loss to understand the most exquisitely finished periods of an Addison, a Goldsmith, or a Scott; a Franklin, an Irving, or a Prescott; provided they are upon a subject suitable to be submitted to his apprehension. It is as necessary for the culture of his mind that at this period he should have intercourse with none but the best authors, as it is for the formation of his manners that he should be as frequently as possible in the society of well-bred men. To place before him a chapter from Mrs. Marcet or Dr. Balaam, is as absurd as at an earlier age to stultify him with that disgusting stuff, called "baby talk," which did the service of an emetic so effectually, with the sensible Dr. Daniel Dove.

The books before us are samples of this class. They are without taste or method in selection or arrangement. Mr. Swan would seem to have little more knowledge of literature, or of literary art, than is derivable from a careless study of the village newspaper. Many of the authors he quotes are anonymous, others are deservedly unknown, and of some of the rest he is so ignorant, that he mistakes even their country, as in the cases of John James Audubon and William D. Gallagher, whom he classifies in the index to the first of the books named at the beginning of this article, as foreigners.

"Wilmsen's Reader; or, the Children's Friend," is said to be from the 150th edition of a Prussian school book; and in its original language it may have been very suitable for the children of Berlin. We see no reason why it should have been translated. For the words in the title, "*long held in the first rank in the celebrated schools of Prussia*," we presume we are indebted to the taste of the publisher.

It would afford us great pleasure to see a book of reading lessons, in its subjects, principles, and literary character, adapted to its purpose. We think of nothing we could commend with a more hearty satisfaction. The task of preparing such a book awaits the attention of a critic thoroughly skilled in the powers and harmonies of language; of a scholar of various and profound knowledge, particularly conversant with the laws of psychological developments, and equally sound in judgment, and conscientious in his labors, to effect it. This subject must strike every thinking person as one of great importance, and the most casual examination of the reading books in use will show that it has hardly ever received any attention from right-minded and competent men.

DISCOVERY OF MSS.—During the late repairs and enlargement of the palace of Blankenburg, numerous MSS. were found, which will, it is said, fill many chasms in the history of past centuries. Many of them are Russian documents of the close of the 17th and beginning of the 18th centuries. Among them are numerous autograph letters of Peter the Great and of the Empress Catharine; likewise many letters addressed to the father, and other relatives of the Czarina, by her lady of honour. Among other works is an ancient MS. of Bonars Edelsteine in 100 Fabeln.

To the Editor of the Literary World.

DEAR SIR:—C. S. Francis's edition of Foster's "Arabian Nights' Entertainments" being now before the public, and the very handsome reprint of Lane's Translation from the press of Messrs. Harper & Brothers, nearly ready for issue, allow me, through the medium of your "Literary World," to offer a few remarks on the origin, &c., of these delightful fictions.

A labor of twenty years, in an entirely new arrangement of the "Thousand and One Nights" (which may possibly hereafter be offered to the public), has enabled me to accumulate a mass of illustrative matter, which I presume to think would not be unacceptable to the general reader, and might also draw the attention of our Orientalists to the great desideratum of a running commentary on the text of that universally admired storehouse of fiction, the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," and thus become, like the meandering streams in the gardens of the East, not only delightful to the sense, but the ever-fruitful source of a continual verdure.

With much respect

I beg to subscribe, dear Sir,

Your very obedient

SAHAL-BEN-HAROUN.

[Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.]

The Origin of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments Considered; with some Remarks on their Literary History, Interpolations, and Additions.

"He who desires to be well acquainted with a people, will not reject their popular stories, or local superstitions." —Sir J. Malcolm.

CHAPTER I.

THE ingenious and inventive principle of the celebrated tales so extensively known and admired as the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," and so justly valued by the Orientalist for the light thus thrown on the customs and manners of the Easterns of the present day, has been equally appreciated by the scholar, the poet, and the lover of romance.

Perhaps no work has been more regarded in every country where literary fiction has ever shone, than these tales, to which, in connexion with the traditions handed down from the East, most of the national legends and early romances of Europe may be distinctly traced.

The date when these tales were first composed or invented is unhesitatingly allowed to be involved in considerable obscurity, while the name of the original author is wholly unknown.

The general work, however, must not be considered homogeneous, but the extended and additional labors of consecutive writers and compilers. In fact, it may be safely concluded that they have, on the attractive principle of the snowball, accumulated something from the life, philosophy, the manners and peculiarities of every Eastern country in which they have successively appeared.

With regard to their title of "The Arabian Nights," doubts have long been expressed of the validity of their Arabic origin; and opinions have been advanced by Orientalists and writers on Eastern fiction, all equally learned but not all equally conclusive, in which their original invention has been ascribed to India, to Persia, and to Arabia.* From the peculiar

* A note from Savary is found in Sale's Koran (c. 7), which may possibly have some hidden connexion with this title of "Nights;" it states that "The (desert) Arabs reckon by nights as we do by days, a custom doubtless arising from the excessive heat of their climate." Night is in a great measure to them what day is to us; while the sun is above the horizon they keep within their tents. Their poets, therefore, never celebrate the charms of a beautiful day, but the words *Leil!* *Leil!* O night! O night! are repeated in all their songs.

predominance of certain facts and circumstances, it is more than probable that they were originally derived from the Sanscrit "Hitopadesa," or, Amicable Instruction," better known in Europe as the "Fables of Vishnu Sarma," the "Fables of Bidpai," or as it has been strangely rendered *Pilpay*. This latter word is evidently a corruption of Bidpai; and Sir W. Jones, on the authority of Cashafi, ascribes the error to an accidental mistake of the copyist. The word Bidpai is derived from a Sanscrit root, of which Baidya is a contraction, signifying a "physician," which is supposed to have been the author's profession, and who is further stated to have been a favorite of his rajah or prince.

As confirmatory of this opinion of the Hindu origin of these Tales, we may at once refer to Fraser's collection of Oriental MSS. as quoted by Dr. Adam Clarke,* in which we learn that the Hitopadesa was originally compiled by the ancient Brahmins, as a treatise on the science of kingly government, under the title of *Kurtuk Dumuk*. This book contained the choicest treasures of wisdom, and the most perfect rules for governing a people, and was preserved by the rajahs or princes with the greatest secrecy and care.

In determining the method by which this book was transferred to the Persian country, another reference to the collection of Fraser will be necessary, in which we find that "about the time of Mohammed's birth, or the latter end of the 6th century, Noishervan the Just, who then governed Persia, with considerable difficulty obtained a copy in India, by means of and through his physician; who, assisted by the vizier, translated it into the Pehlvi, or ancient Persian. This work was greatly estimated by Noishervan and his successors, who, like the Indian princes, preserved it with the closest secrecy.

In establishing this identity of the original source whence these tales are undoubtedly derived, we will now avail ourselves of the authority of Sir John Malcolm, who in his "Sketches of Persia" expressly states: "That all the ancient tales are taken from the Hitopadesa and the still more famous work the 'Panchra Tantra (Panchôpakhyan or Five Tales),' and in a preceding passage he writes 'since the sacred (i.e. Brahminic) language of the Hindus has become more generally known, the Persians are discovered to have been not only the plunderers of their real goods and chattels, but also of their works of imagination.'" In another part of this same chapter, this abstraction and usurpation by a foreign people, is still further pointed out in the following: "the said Persians and Arabians have been tried and convicted not only of robbing the poor Hindus of their tales and fables, but of an attempt to disguise their plagiarisms by the alteration of names, and by introducing in place of the deities of the Hindu Pantheon, the Magi and spirits which peculiarly belong to the followers of Zoroaster."

From the fact that these fables have been translated under various titles, into more than twenty of the languages and dialects of Asia, embracing not only the Malay and Hebrew, but as a consequent, Persian and Arabic, it may therefore be safely set down, that to India are we originally indebted for the groundwork of these wondrous relations.

The learned Orientalist, Von Hammer, however, in commenting on a passage in Masûrûdi, as to the source of the "Arabian Nights," says: "It results that the tales of a Thousand

and One Nights, are of Indian or rather Persian origin."** With every respect for M. V. Hammer's opinion (although with De Sacy he has since transferred their nativity to Arabia), though their Indian origin may be readily allowed, it would not be prudent to concede more than their adaptation or appropriation by Persia, not only for the reasons already advanced, but for the more powerful fact that many of the tales may be distinctly traced to a more remote period than the Persian era, and for this reason we must conclude that the Persian "Thousand Fables" are founded on their Humaïou and Shah Nameh, or *Imperial Book*, which is confessedly a translation through the Pehlvi or ancient Persic of the Hitopadesa of the Indian nation.

This question might be further argued on many other points were it necessary, but we leave it as a settled decision, that the invention and adaptation of these tales is founded on the original work of the Sanscrit author. The next emission, however, in the form of tales and fabulary sketches, may be safely credited to Persia, inasmuch as the groundwork and mythology of the whole corresponds with the ancient history of that country, more than with that of any other; and it is to this period, therefore, we may assign the appearance of the Persian "Hezar Afsanah," or Thousand Fables, which, as a history of an Indian king, his vizier, the vizier's daughter, *Sheherzade*, and her *governess*, *Dinarzade*, appears most probably to have been the first arrangement and adaptation of the tales. It is also worthy of particular regard, that although the original adapter or modeller of these tales was undoubtedly a Mahomedan, not only is the commencement of these stories laid in ancient Persia, whose people were notoriously celebrated as Magicians and Worshipers of Fire, and from whom the modern Parsees are descended, but that the Persian country is also the scene of the greater portion of these histories, either primarily or incidentally.

The only remaining claim now to be considered as regards the originating of these tales and stories, is that of Arabia, and in supporting the pretension of that country, the following passage from the writings of Sir J. Malcolm, has been freely quoted by the Arabian adherents as exclusively favoring the original possession. The passage reads: "Throughout these tales the Ghebers or worshippers of fire, are as magicians the (sole) perpetrators of all atrocities,—and probably, reasoning from this deduction that the Magians would not have consented to revile themselves, they have set up the quotation as 'irrefragable evidence' that these tales 'are of Arabian manufacture.'"

That the whole of this conclusion is erroneous we have no hesitation in declaring; for, so far from establishing their claim for origination to Arabia, the tendency of the quotation will, on examination, be found decidedly adverse to any such result, and for the following reasons, the substance of which we find in an article on the Ancient Persian Poetry, in F. Q. Rev., October, 1836, and which we think will be regarded as effectual and conclusive.

Mohammed, with the sagacity which marked his career, saw that the imagination of his countrymen was naturally of an ardent and inquisitive temperament, and knowing the fallacy of his pretended mission, he strove, with all the bitterness of fanatical hatred, to inflame the minds of his followers against the religion and early literature of a country in

which they might one day detect much of the groundwork of his factitious revelations. Hence the distinction drawn by him, between the *Atish-purwists* or Magians, and the professors of the Jewish and Christian faiths; for while on the two latter his own was declaredly founded, their codes of belief being obviously at hand, and their numerous denominations worth conciliation, distance and difference of language alike operated to lessen the chances of detection and proselytism, from the repudiated creed and disciples of Zerdusht.

Assuming, therefore, that the transition of these tales from India to Persia has been fairly established, their further progress from the latter country to their cherished home in Arabia, may next be considered.

Their first translation into the Arabic has been attributed alike to the caliphs Al Mansur and his descendant Al Mamoun, but as there is a lapse of nearly three-quarters of a century between the accessions of these two monarchs, and during which the celebrated Haroun Al Raschid, father of Al Mamoun, enjoyed the Caliphate for nearly one third of that period, we may naturally suppose the difference to arise from a confusion or admixture of the names and references. A discovery, however, mentioned in the preface to Rev. Mr. Lamb's translation of Von Hammer's "*New Arabian Nights*," will, we think, restore the necessary harmony to these conflicting statements.

The quotation is taken from an Arabian Historical work of high reputation, entitled the *Muruj ud dhahab*, or Golden Meadows, by Masûrûdi, and well known through the *Bibliothèque Orientale* of D'Herbelot, and names the Persian *Hezar Afsanah*, or Thousand Tales, as one of the works translated from the Indian, Persian, and Greek languages into the Arabic by command of Al Mansur (regn. A.D. 754), second caliph of the Abbasside dynasty,—and, who, it may be remembered, had removed the seat of government from Damascus to his new built city of Bagdad on the Tigris.

This, it will be seen, was about thirty years before the reign of his grandson, the renowned Haroun Al Raschid, who was destined to play so distinguished a part in the later editions of this work.

That Al Mansur is entitled to honorable mention as the first translator of these tales from the Persian text, there can be no question, and as corroborative of this estimation, we would refer to the 116th chapter of the same work by Masûrûdi, in which it is distinctly stated, "This (Al Mansur) was the first caliph who caused Persian and Greek books to be translated into Arabic!"

This edition of Al Mansur's, we may, however, consider as but of meagre appearance, compared with the *new* collection by his descendant Al Mamoun, who, as son and successor of Haroun Al Raschid, reigned from 813 to 833.

Like his father, Al Mamoun was a great encourager of science and learning. At his court were to be found savans and philosophers from every part of the world, "Syrian physicians, and Hindu mathematicians and astronomers." He also founded colleges and libraries in the principal cities of his dominions; built observatories and constructed accurate instruments for planetary calculations, and personally took a peculiar interest in astronomy and general science. It was also under his direction that Mohammed ben Musa wrote an elementary treatise on algebra, the earliest systematic work extant on that branch of mathematics, and for which, however, as in the case of the "Nights' Entertainments," they

* Bib. Com. Judges c. ix. in fine.

* V. Journales Asiat. Soc. de Paris, in Lit. Gaz. April, 1837.

are chiefly indebted to the original Hindu writers.

It is not surprising that in a country where learning was the principal road to honor, and the favor of the sovereign was most readily awarded to literary merit, the court of Bagdad should thus become the great resort of genius and philosophy. And although this distinguished national eminence was but of short duration, yet the periods embraced by the Caliphates, from the days of Al Mansur (753), including the reign of Haroun Al Raschid, and extending to the decease of his son Al Mamoun (833), must necessarily be acknowledged as the Augustan age of Arabic literature and science.

With such advantages as these, we may readily conclude that the continuance and extension of a work so exciting to the imagination of the Arabians, was hailed with enthusiasm by the people as a new addition to their pleasures; and from this period we may justly regard the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments" as the property of literature and the world!

S. B. H.

(To be continued.)

Home Correspondence.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

Boston, February 3, 1848.

WE can no longer say that the "winter of our discontent" is made "glorious summer," for we have had a snow-storm, followed by a heavy fall of rain, which has robbed the Italian winter that we have been enjoying, of all its romance, and rendered the walking most delectably sloppy. This, the pressure in the money-market, and the prevailing influenza, make it emphatically the "winter of our discontent." But there is great satisfaction in the reflection that there is "in the lowest deep, a lower deep;" for, if things are disagreeable in the city, what must be the condition of the inhabitants of the country! We have always had a strong attachment to a city life—we love the "sweet security of streets," and the humanizing influences of social intercourse. It will do very well to pass a short time during the summer in the country, or to poetize occasionally upon the enjoyments of rural life;—but, for a permanent residence, and for a true appreciation of the genuine spirit of life, give us a city, even though it be, as Thomas Carlyle says, "full of smoke and sin." A recent flying visit to the country served to strengthen these sentiments, and tempted us to affirm with James Smith, that "London is the best place in summer, and the *only* place in winter."

The attention of the Boston *dilettanti*, during the past month, has been principally directed towards the Italian Opera. The advent of the new *Prima Donna*, Signora Biscaccianti, will be long remembered by our lovers of the divine art, as a succession of brilliant triumphs, and a period of the most unbounded enthusiasm. At a complimentary benefit, which was given to her last week, the premiums paid, at auction, for the mere choice of seats, amounted to more than eight hundred dollars. Although this *furor* may, in a degree, be accounted for by the fact that Signora Biscaccianti is a native of Boston, and that her father, Mr. Ostinelli, was a favorite musician here for a number of years,—yet all who have witnessed her performances agree in pronouncing her to be an *artiste* of most extraordinary merit; and one in whom the highest order of vocal and histrionic power is happily combined. The simple fact that she performed here through an engagement of four weeks with complete success, is a sufficient refutation of the idea that sectional prejudice was the principal cause of her popularity.

For a week past, the risibilities of our citizens have been somewhat excited by the judicial ex-

amination of a case, brought about by the forcible ejection of a gentleman from a fashionable boarding-house, for kissing the daughter of the landlady during a game of blind-man's buff, and eating a piece of pie for luncheon, in defiance of the regulations of the house. It (the story, not the pie) is now in everybody's mouth. Ten hours were exhausted in court in establishing the fact of the young lady's being kissed. The plea for the defence surpasses in richness of burlesque the plea of Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz, in the memorable case of *Bardell versus Pickwick*. The affair has been dramatized, and is performing at one of the theatres; but we cannot see how it could be burlesqued, for it would be very difficult to invent anything more ridiculous. Thus do we "catch the manners living as they rise."

Professor Agassiz is delivering a course of lectures on Ichthyology at the Lowell Institute, which is crowded with the devotees of science, and many others who are charmed by the interest with which the urbane lecturer invests this seemingly *dry* subject. The lectures, this season, are delivered in the hall recently occupied by the Chinese Museum, which has been remodelled and is now known as the Lowell Institute. It makes a very beautiful lecture-room, containing seats for about fourteen hundred persons, with spacious ante-rooms for scientific apparatus and conveniences for the display of diagrams. In only one respect, can fault be found; like many other public buildings in America, there is a want of proper ventilation: when the house is crowded, the atmosphere has a decidedly soporific effect.

We learn that the next course of lectures will be delivered by Mr. Francis Bowen, the Editor of the North American Review; on Systems of Philosophy considered as affecting the Evidences of Religion.

The rush for Mr. Longfellow's "Evangeline" continues unabated, and its popularity seems to be on the increase, in spite of the prophetic condemnation which has been bestowed upon it by some of our blood-thirsty critics. Messrs. TICKNOR & Co have just published the sixth edition.

Professor Felton of Harvard University, delivered a very beautiful and interesting lecture before the Mercantile Library Association last week, upon that portion of the history of Nova Scotia, on which the story of Evangeline is founded.

Speaking of Professors—Dr. Asa Gray, the author of the "Botanical Text-Book," has been preparing a new work entitled "The Botany of the Northern United States," in one volume octavo. It will be shortly published by Messrs. JAMES MUNROE & Co. Dr. Gray has also in course of preparation another work on his favorite science, which he intends to embellish with beautiful illustrations. It will be published some time during the approaching summer.

Messrs. MUNROE & Co. will also publish in a few days, Dr. J. P. Nichol's "Thoughts on some Important Points relating to the system of World." They have just received a supply of the "Stellar Universe," by the same author, which has just been published in Edinburgh.

But the most interesting feature in the literary intelligence of the day, is the announcement of Tennyson's new poem, "The Princess, a Medley." Messrs. TICKNOR & Co. have it in press, and will issue it in a few days. It is to be printed on new type, and in that elegant style which characterizes all their publications. We have been favored with a glance at some of the proof-sheets, and are thus enabled to afford a foretaste of the rich banquet which the lovers of poesy will soon have spread before them. The pages sparkle with gems of the purest fancy, given to us in the true Tennysonian setting; and the "riches fineless" with which the book is loaded, render it difficult for us to select two or three choice passages. The following is a description of a crowd of beautiful girls, entering a field which has just been the scene of a tournament.

"Anon
Thro' the open field into the lists they wound
Timorously; and as the leader of the herd
That holds a stately fretwork to the Sun,
And followed up by a hundred airy does,
Steps with a tender foot, light as an air,
The lovely, lordly creature floated on
To where her wounded brethren lay; there stay'd;
Kneel on one knee,—the child on one,—and prest
Their hands, and called them dear deliverers,
And happy warriors, and immortal names,
And said, 'You shall not lie in the tents, but here,
And nursed by those for whom you fought, and served
With female hands and hospitality.'"

"Not pence, she looked, the Head: but rising up
Robed in the long night of her deep hair, so
To the open window moved, remaining there
Fixt like a beacon tower above the waves
Of tempest, when the crimson rolling eye
Glares ruin, and the wild sea birds on the light
Dash themselves dead. She stretched her arms and
called
Across the tumult and the tumult fell!"

Here is a beautiful description of a village festival in the park of the Lord of the manor:—

"A herd of boys with clamor bowled
At the stump'd wicket; babies rolled about
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maids
Arranged a country dance, and flew thro' light
And shadow, while the twanging violin
Struck up the Soldier-ladie, and overhead
The broad, ambrosial aisles of lofty lime
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end."

The poem concludes with the betrothal of Ida, the heroine, to the Prince:

"My bride,
My wife, my life. O, we will walk this world,
Yoked in all exercise of noble end,
And so thro' those dark gates across the wild
That no man knows."

This beautiful simile is all that we have room for at present:—

"Down through her limbs a drooping languor wept;
Her head a little bent; and on her mouth
A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded moon
In a still water."

The "Princess" may be regarded as a new wreath added to the hard-earned laurels of its author, and as an earnest of the noble strains in which he is destined to sing his immortality. It is a solid, masterly specimen of writing: in reading it we have been strongly reminded of a passage in one of the poems of Keats, a kindred spirit of our bard:—

"A drainless shower
Of light is poesy; 'tis the supreme of power;
'Tis might half-slumbering on his own right arm."

But any criticism of ours were superfluous, while we can quote the opinion of so high an authority as the London Examiner, which says of it:—

"Everywhere we have traces of the footsteps of a genuine poet, of a man of true and fervid genius. The flowers and fruits of poetry are scattered round in tropical profusion. Fitly, and with beautiful decision, the finest words fall into the aptest places. The structure of the verse follows the thoughts as their echo. We have pictures in abundance, and in many styles. A severe simplicity sets off the wealthiest exuberance. The familiar and the lofty, the ideal and the homely, the comic and the tragic, run side by side, obedient to a master's hand. There is also character nicely conceived, subtly drawn forth, and sustained with dramatic exactness. In short, there is hardly an element of first-rate poetry which is not contained in the *Princess*."

But we must descend again to our mundane sphere. HENRY LEE, Esq., of this city, who has been favorably known for a number of years as the writer of the commercial articles in the Boston Daily Advertiser, has written, and is on the point of publishing an extensive and profound work on the "Cotton Trade and Cotton Manufactures." Mr. Lee's reputation as a thinker and writer upon these subjects will insure for his book a favorable reception by the mercantile community.

The exterior of the new Athenæum building is now completed, and the boards, in which it was encased during the process of erection, have been removed. It is unquestionably the finest public building in Boston. The interior will doubtless be finished in an equally substantial and elegant style, but the arrangements have not yet been made manifest to the profane.

The fifteenth volume of Sparks's American Biography, second series, is in press by Messrs. LITTLE & BROWN. It will contain the lives of William Davie and Kirkland, the missionary, written respectively by the Editor and the Rev. Samuel K. Lothrop.

At a meeting of the Board of Overseers of Harvard University, held the day before yesterday, the following nominations of the Faculty were concurred in:—Of Louis Agassiz as Professor of Geology and Zoology; of Joel Parker as Royal Professor of Law; Henry Wheaton as Professor of Civil Law and Law of Nations; John C. Warren as Emeritus Professor of Surgery; Oliver Wendell Holmes as Parkman Professor of Anatomy and Physiology; John B. S. Jackson as Professor of Pathological Anatomy and Curator; and Jeffries Wyman as Hersey Professor of Anatomy. The clerical vacancy in the Board, occasioned by the death of the Rev. Dr. Codman, was filled by the election of the Rev. William A. Stearns of Cambridge.

At the recent dedication of the new rooms of the Mercantile Library Association, in Broomfield street, an Address was delivered by Mr. Daniel N. Haskell, and a Poem by Mr. S. Dix, both members of the association. They have just been published, and no one could fail of being pleased by the perusal of them. Mr. Haskell gives us a sound exposition of his views of Mutual Improvement societies, in the strong common sense style of an original thinker; and Mr. Dix's Poem, hitting off Modern Improvements, is very entertaining; considered as the composition of a merchant's clerk, it is a production of high literary merit. C. B. F.

Poetry.

STANZAS.

"Crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures where there is no love."—LOCKE.

Love me! only love me,
Mine is woman's heart—
Give to that its answer;
Though all else depart.

Love me! let the yearning
Meet affection's tone,
Which from Earth or Heaven
Asks but that alone.

Love me! and the blessing
Shall return to thee,
For love answers loving
Through Eternity.

So sweetly sang a thoughtless maid,
Who love in every heart inspired—
So blindly vowed should be repaid
The love which twenty bosoms fired.

Ah, if one ventured but to name
The love he lavished there before,
Did she pay back but half his claim
'Twould beggar her for evermore.

The Fine Arts.

HOW TO LEARN TO DRAW.

If people did but know how easy a thing it is to learn to draw, what an unfailing source of pleasure the accomplishment produces; in fact, what a deal of daily life, now lost and wasted, might be turned to profit and to good account by its simple means, drawing would become as universal as writing. "Any one who can learn to write can learn to draw," is the "great fact" which forms the basis of Mr. Chapman's excellent work, the "American Drawing-Book,"* and it should be received as an axiom of education.

* The American Drawing-Book; a Manual for the Amateur, and Basis of Study for the Professional Artist; especially adapted to the use of public and private schools, as well as Home Instruction. By J. G. Chapman, N.A. 4to. New York: J. S. Redfield. 1847.

"But, my dear Sir," says some good friend, "do not you and Mr. Chapman go a little too far? To be sure, I can write a tolerably legible hand, but as for ever learning to draw, that is entirely out of the question, when I can't even represent the side of a house, except in caricature." And then perhaps his daughter, a fine girl of sixteen, chimes in, "You may say it's an easy thing to draw, but I have been learning a whole year, and though I can copy Mr. Pencil's drawings nicely enough, yet I have just now been trying for an hour to sketch the old tree opposite the window, and have given it up in despair, for I can make nothing of it."

Well, my good friend, we reply, the mere fact that you cannot draw does not prove that you never could have learned. You would say the same of writing, if it were not so universal and you were ignorant of it; and when Mr. Chapman explains to you that all the time you were learning to write you were learning to draw to a certain extent; that your "pothooks and hangers" were rudiments of drawing, which if followed up would have enabled you to delineate the house you now draw in caricature, correctly and artistically; you will have a better opinion of your capacity and feel almost indignant that so simple a branch of your education should have been so shamefully neglected. You commenced to learn to write by making straight lines; so with the student who begins to draw,—then you went to curved lines—so in drawing; the steps and gradations are the same, the only difference is that you aimed only in writing to the imitation of a few conventional forms, while the student in drawing goes on to the objects of nature, and has his end far beyond his vision in the boundless region of Art. And you, my dear young lady, who have taken lessons of a drawing-master at school or at home, twice or thrice a week, and produced a goodly number of copies of heads, landscapes, and flowers, your "talent for drawing," which induced the instruction, has been fatally abused, and has been the victim of a wrong method of teaching. Had you been properly taught you could not, perhaps, have yet been able to produce a landscape like that you have so carefully elaborated stroke by stroke, dot by dot, after the drawing by your master; but you could have been able to draw the tree you have labored so vainly to stretch in such a manner that its form and general characteristics might be readily recognised. Let us explain this matter a little more at length.

The power of drawing exists in the head and the intellect, and not in the hand, and the system of teaching that does not recognise this, is good for nothing. A perception of form is the first process,—a thorough understanding of the proportions of the different parts of an object and its general character as shown by them; this is the chief difficulty; the indication and delineation of the object are comparatively easy. Essential as is the necessity of skill, yet the mastery of the mind must govern the mastery of the hand, or it is a waste of labor and a cheat of the senses. The Chinese excel in mere manual skill; they will copy anything and everything that is merely physical, but their original works, their figures and perspective, are interesting only from their ludicrous monstrosity. And it is the Chinese system that our teachers of drawing have adopted. They set before their pupil a drawing or a lithographic print, and say to him, "This is an imitation of Nature; by copying such as these, and observing how I hold the pencil and produce certain lines, you will learn

to imitate Nature yourself." What a fallacy is this! He is to have no explanation why these lines are to be set down in certain places and produced in this particular way, or why the fence in the next field, which the pupil knows is on the same level with the fence in that nearest him, should nevertheless be put above it on the paper. No, let him blindly copy the picture before him, and when he has finished, his admiring friends and relatives "wonder with a foolish face of praise;" but ask him to sketch you from Nature a log by the roadside, and after various attempts with pencil and india-rubber, he reluctantly admits "he never learned to do that." He can draw you another picture like that you have in your hand, or he can copy a drawing of his teacher's, but he can do nothing more.

Now what we would have is something different from all this, a power to represent the appearance of an object drawn from the object itself, and not the mere copying of the productions of another—a manifestation of the mind rather than of the hands. Such a power can only be gained by a systematic course of teaching from Nature herself. Let a child commence with a representation of the simplest kind; a square block for instance, a form which he perfectly understands; let him learn why the lines in its retreating sides apparently converge to one point, why we can see only three of these sides at once, and how they must be delineated, and from this let him pass through more intricate forms, till at last he will be able to put on paper an imitation of the most extended landscape. This, you will say, perhaps, is a slow and tedious business, and is rather the routine of one who intends to be an artist; what you want is that your child should be able to give you some representation of that charming spot where you passed last summer, or your father's old house in the country. But there is no railroad, no short-cut to Art, any more than there is to learning; and whatever the drawing-teacher may tell you to the contrary, these steps are necessary to the attainment of power to represent correctly, even the simplest forms and scenes of Nature. The old proverb, "Art is long and Life is short," which our teachers would seem to have reversed, is nevertheless still true, and a lifetime is not ill spent in learning to do for yourself what a clever boy may learn to copy mechanically in a few weeks. And you must not suppose that because your son is not to become a professional artist, all this gradual progress is needless. There is a long distance between learning to draw and the being an artist, and so far as he proceeds, let it be over firm ground and in the right direction. Hear what Mr. Chapman says on this:—

"Who has ever hesitated to teach a child to write, because it was not intended that he should be an author? How many regard the art of Drawing as being of no practical importance, as a branch of education, to any but professional artists; and consider it, in its most favorable light, as a mere accomplishment—a pursuit only for the man of leisure? The resources of our schools are often exhausted in 'finishing' our youth with 'every accomplishment,' laid on so lightly, that, for all real and practical purposes, they are as ephemeral as the gay tints of the painted butterfly. Smatterings of languages, living and dead, are heaped upon them, while the great, universal language, the language of Design, is forgotten; or only thought of in the production of some huge 'castle and ruins, with a man and a boy with a stick; and a dog'—painted by the teacher, under the scholar's direction, to hang in the parlor, as the veritable, first, and last, and only production, of the latter: who at once assumes, therefrom, an oracular au-

thority in all matters connected with the Fine Arts, and leaves admiring friends in wonder, at what 'he might have done, had he not given it up.' To such, it may be said, 'You have never begun.'"

The uses of drawing, not merely as an accomplishment or a source of amusement for leisure hours, but for purposes of practical utility in every station in life, it is hardly worth while to expatiate upon; they therefore make a part of the commonest education. Let the writing master and the drawing teacher have an equal share of instruction to bestow, they will mutually assist each other, they will be equally successful:

"Let this useful and beautiful art, therefore, no longer be considered as a mystery, confined to a gifted few, but take its place with its sister arts, in our systems of general education. The young and tender capacity is early prepared for it; its first impulses are harmonious with it; and, while it may be made to shed gladness and sunshine upon the hours of coercion to the school-bench; when the mind is for ever wandering from the primer to the bright fields, and scenes, and objects, of childhood's joys, its pursuit leads not from, but in the direction of, all other knowledge, assists in its acquirement, tends to strengthen the mind and purify the taste, and bestows a capacity for intellectual pleasure, apart from its practical utility, that should give it place among the first requisites in common, as well as finished education."

Miscellany.

MR. POE'S LECTURE.

THE subject of this gentleman's discourse at the Society Library was, *the Cosmogony of the Universe*. He began by reading a letter which had been found enclosed in a bottle drifting upon the sea, the date of which was two thousand eight hundred and forty-eight. The letter was quite an original and brilliant affair; being an attempt to show the folly of the philosophers of the nineteenth century, in that they reasoned entirely upon the Baconian method. It argued that no certain knowledge could ever be acquired in that way; and no discoveries of the laws or law of the universe could be achieved. The *a priori* method was pronounced to be the only satisfactory one, the mind in every case inevitably falling back upon axioms and impressions. The letter contained many very amusing historical blunders. The Baconian system was named after Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, who was its inventor, &c., &c.

Mr. Poe having thus taken out a license to present a theory of his own for the construction of the universe, proceeded to give one, the substance of which is as follows: Matter, by a single volition of the Deity, was irradiated from himself, and universally diffused throughout space. It was, therefore, originally contained in the Godhead. When irradiated it was endowed with a power of attraction. As soon as the diffusion ceased, that is, when the single volition of the Deity had ceased to energize, matter strove at once to return again to its original unity. The larger atoms, acting according to the general law of gravity, attracted to themselves the smaller; everywhere the process of agglomeration proceeded until matter was collected into systems of monster-atoms, called planets. These, in their revolution, threw off satellites, and sometimes themselves burst into fragments or asteroids. These systems themselves tend to unity; after unnumbered cycles shall have passed away, each collection of stars will consolidate into one mighty mass; and yet again, these masses

still struggling towards unity, shall unite in one overwhelming globe, and that globe will merge and disappear in the Deity. This vast process of the ingathering of worlds is now going on, and when it shall have been completed, the diffusion may again take place in a modified and yet more glorious form, to be followed by the same agglomeration and ingathering. Thus may the alternation be continued through eternal ages. It might be said that the nebular hypothesis had been exploded by the telescope at Cincinnati, and the instrument of Lord Rosse; but on the contrary such results only confirmed the theory. Indeed, were any nebulae to be found, it would be a perfect refutation of his theory. The diffusion of nebulous matter was instantaneous, and the process of condensation commenced immediately, so that, of course, no nebulosities would be found at this late period. The common notion, that each planet was made and moulded, and then rolled to its place in its system, was unphilosophical and awkward.

This is, of course, but a meagre exhibition of the idea of the lecture. It occupied two hours and a half in its delivery, and consequently, notwithstanding the highly intellectual character of the audience, might have been deemed rather long by some who found portions of it too much condensed, and too abstruse for apprehension. The freedom and boldness of the speculations, together with the nervousness and vivacity of the reading, made the whole performance in the highest degree entertaining; and its publication will be anticipated with much interest by the many admirers of the author.

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY.

THIS valuable Literary Institution is one of the few old New York institutions that has become respectable, not only from its usefulness, and the value of its collection, but also from its age and local character. Its history reaches back to the beginning of the last century, an antiquity shared only with that of Trinity Church, and beyond that of Columbia College or the New York Hospital, the four city institutions of greatest antiquity we can refer to.

The Library has been a species of higher university to the young men and litterateurs of our city for many generations, and is unquestionably an institution deserving of respect, and worthy of being cherished. Were it placed in the city of Boston or New Haven, it would have been enriched by grants from the State, and the donations of wealthy and public spirited individuals. But here, in the commercial metropolis of the Union, it is comparatively unknown and neglected.

The most prominent men of New York have been, at different times, connected with this Library (after those of Yale and Harvard inferior to none in the United States), and the best names are to be found in the roll of its shareholders. It is for these reasons, for its city character, and from its high position, that we wish it to be more generally known by the rising generation, and by the new comers who are daily becoming domesticated around us.

What has led us to the above remarks is the sight of a catalogue of some choice new works and fine reprints just received, as well as of the books themselves, for which we have to thank the courtesy of the gentlemanly and intelligent Librarian, P. S. Forbes, Esq. The books are well selected, and we remark yearly a discriminating employment of funds

for the addition of new books to the Library. In History, in the philosophy of Art, in Science and Miscellaneous Literature, the additions are of the highest value. Many of these books are not reprinted here, and are procurable only at a high cost by importation.

All the current publications in England and the United States are procured as they appear, and at an early period.

The whole number of volumes added to the Library during the past year amounts to nearly one thousand.

THE MARCH OF MIND.—A learned writer upon the subject of the Hudson River Railway now in active process of construction upon the margin of that noble stream, talks of "improving the river bank by hiding the irregular indentations of bays." Mr. Downing might derive from this suggestion a valuable hint for a new theory of Landscape Gardening. These bays, however, are but little observed by steam-boat voyagers, upon the middle of the stream. The promontories thrust themselves far more obtrusively upon one's notice, and their irregularities being vertical as well as horizontal, should be first remedied.

THE PAINTER.

"PAINTER, come forth, thou art the Poet's brother,
His fellow huntman in the fatal quest,
Whose sport is beauty, oft your bitter dooming,
When on your raptured sight some radiant nymph
Or fair divinity would seem to rise,
Like baffled hounds thrown off an eager scent,
Your fancies fail, and on their rash creator,
Who hath so long cheered on their ardent course,
They turn, and on his dark and tortured heart
Feed with revengeful fancy. A better fate
Is his who broods o'er beauty. Yet in vain
Unto the common scenes and moods of life
Man turns, and would be worldly. In his heart,
Deeply implanted, is the thirst divine
That pants for heavenly fountains—waters pure
And bland, and bright, that fill the swelling soul
With thoughts sublime. The great ideal tints
The breathing tablet—this ennobling lust
Inspires the Poet's voice, and from their bave
Hath moved trembling statues and their rapt
And mazed creators—turned to passionate lovers;
And I, who recognised in glorious man
A reverential being, born to bow
Before the grand and lovely—I who, formed
As on a rock of adamant—secure
And precious, on this all-inspiring truth
His creed, his laws, his customs, formed a soul
To whose immortal sympathy in vain
The painter and the sculptor ne'er appeal;
And what could Hellas, in her pride of Art,
Though the bright memory of her glory glows
Like an eternal sunset—call to life
Of more surpassing beauty than the forms
That fill the feudal tablets with their breath,
Seraphic saints, the dying ecstasy
And gushing radiance of whose deep blue eyes
Reflects the approaching light of Paradise?
Martyrs whose symmetry makes martyrdom
The fitting fate of such celestial shapes,
And the boy-God upon the all-flavored breast
Stumbling with rosy dreams of perfect love,
While the transcendent mother with a glance—
Sweet, yet most solemn! calm, yet most profound,
Seems conscious of a doom too high for speech.
Ye mighty witnesses, once more I summon,
The tribute of your test! Say who hath read
The secrets of your dwellings? Who revealed
Your mystic courses? Hath he not this man,
His genius prompted by my skill profound;
This atom of a moment hath he not
Measured dread space, and given laws to Time?
Ye stars! In vain ye dazzle! All your beams
Cloud not his piercing eye—though night herself
Enhance your lustre with her sable robe.
Bright morn! thou art his slave; a silver link
Enchains thee to his waters! Then toll on,
And make the waves obedient to his will;
And thou, fierce sun! In spite of all thy pride
The moment comes when e'en thy flaming brow
Grows dead and pale before an enemy;
Man knows thy doom, and knowing, does not fear,—
But when the dim and quivering hour arrives
And shuddering nature to her centre shrinks
And thrills in all her pulses! Man alone,
With front erect, the day sublime observes,
And gathers wisdom from thy baffled power,
Nor triumph, haughty winds, although your rage
May level palaces and tear the roots
Of mighty woods! the children of my sway,
They fear ye not; but in your arrogant teeth
Will steer their course sublime, and for the rest—
Man has his thunder—Gods can have no more!

A STARVELING YANKEE.

One of these men, a lean and lank Kentuckian, who, rambled at any time, was now a perfect skeleton, came up to me, and in a whisper, for his voice was lost for a time, requested to consult me on an important matter. The appearance of the poor fellow was comical in the extreme. His long black hair was combed over his face and forehead, and hung down his back and over his shoulders; and his features, with cheek-bones protruding almost through the skin, wore an indescribable serio-comic expression. He was, in fact, what his appearance indicated, a "Puritan," and his words drewled out of his throat like fathoms of cable, or the sermon of a Methodist preacher.—"Stranger," he said to me, "you have been about the world, I guess, and ar a likely to know. What," he asked, putting his face close to mine, "might be the worth in your country of a camlet cloak? I never see sich a cloak as that ar one in no parts," he continued, looking up into the sky, as if the spectre of the camlet cloak was there. "I've worn that ar cloak more nor ten years, lined right away through with the best kind of bleachin.—Stranger," he continued, "it's a bad fix them poor boys is in, away out thar in them darned dried-up hills, and it jest doubles me up to think on it. Now, I want to know what's the worth of such a fixen as that ar camlet cloak?" I answered that I could not possibly tell, knowing nothing of such matters. "Well, stranger, all I ar got to say is this—thar aint sech another cloak as that between this and Louisville, anyhow you can fix it, and I want to know if the govner here will send out to them hills to bring in that ar camlet cloak. It lays jest whar we left them poor boys." I told him that, although I did not think the "govner" would exactly send out a detachment in search of his cloak, yet I had no doubt but that some steps would be taken to rescue the unfortunate men who were left in the sierras, and that if I went myself I would endeavor to recover it for him. This calmed him considerably, and taking me by the arm, he said solemnly, "Stranger, I'll thank you for that;" and, turning away, I heard him soliloquizing,—“Sech a cloak as that ar aint nowhere between this and Louisville.”

The owner of the lost garment volunteered to accompany me in search of the missing men, for whose recovery he said he would give all he had, even the "camlet cloak;" and I found him the best man of the party. During the journey he rode by my side, the whole subject of his discourse being the merits of the wonderful garment. As we drew near the spot where he had left it, his excitement became intense. He speculated as to how it was lying—was it folded up?—had the rain injured it? &c.; and at last (he had been riding for some time with his head bent forward, and his eyes almost starting from his head) he darted suddenly on, jumped from his horse, and seized upon something lying on the ground. Holding up to my view an old tattered Benjamin, with a catskin collar, and its original blue stained to a hundred different hues, he exultingly exclaimed, "Stranger, h'yar's the darned old cloak: hurraw for my old camlet cloak! but, darn it, whar's them poor boys?"—*Adventures in Mexico.*

DR. CROTCH.—The death of Dr. Crotch, the musical professor of the University of Oxford, is announced in the English papers. He died suddenly whilst seated at a family dinner with his son, on the 29th ult., at Taunton, aged 72. He was the author of many fine and popular compositions, including the Oratorio of Palestine.

Recent Publications.

History of the United States, designed for Schools. By Egbert Guernsey, A.M. 1 vol. 12mo., pp. 450. Cady & Burgess: New York.

It is not easy to pronounce confidently upon the merits of a school-book, without partially testing it by actual experience. Books, apparently well adapted for the purpose, have proved utter failures, not so much from the matter as the manner in which the instruction was conveyed; and, as a thorough knowledge of the youthful mind is allotted to but few, with the best intentions we frequently fall short of the anticipated success. There are, however, certain general principles which must never be lost sight of, and no rule is more important than that which enjoins the withholding of speculative opinions. What we do put before children should be positive knowledge—well-ascertained facts, leaving the comments and inferences to the teacher. Viewed in this light, the present work, with the exception of the first thirty or forty pages, is singularly free from defect. The history of America, from the discovery by Columbus down to the capture of the Mexican capital, is narrated in a style, which, though not without minor blemishes, conveys a clear and faithful account of its leading features. In addition to presenting "a correct historical chain of events," it has also entered into the author's plan to impress on his youthful readers "the important fact that their fathers were working out the great designs of God, and were aided by him in their glorious consummation." Questions for examination are annexed to each paragraph, colored maps, plans, and other engravings, are interspersed with the text, and being neatly printed and issued at a low price, we should suppose the publishers will have no reason to complain of lack of appreciation on the part of the public.

Chambers' Miscellany of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge, No. 12. Price 25 cents.

THIS number contains a Sketch of the History of Poland, apparently made up from articles which have appeared from time to time in "Chambers's Edinburgh Journal," but none the worse for being put into a more portable form. It also presents us with an interesting account of the Shetland Islands, the "Story of Baron Trenck," and some beautiful old English and Scottish Ballads, The Nut-Brown Maid and the Heir of Linne being among the number. This work well deserves the popularity which it has attained.

Parental Duties; and the Blessings resulting from their faithful Performance. By the Rev. Thos. Houston. 18mo., pp. 224.

A LITTLE book issued by the Presbyterian Board of Education at Philadelphia, the title of which sufficiently indicates its character. The author is actuated by an earnest desire to impress upon parents the duty of an early and diligent instruction of their children, and has put forth this manual "for parental direction and encouragement."

The Work claiming to be the Constitutions of the Holy Apostles; including the Canons, Whiston's Version, revised from the Greek, with a Prize Essay, at the University of Bonn, upon their Origin and Contents. Translated from the German. By Irah Chase, D.D. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1848. 8vo. pp. 496.

THE controversy which existed at different periods, respecting the Apostolical Constitutions, and which was managed on both sides with a wonderful display of learning, acumen, and critical ability, may at this date be regarded as settled, so far at least as the authorship of St. Clement of Rome is concerned. They are no doubt ancient, we are disposed to think even more ancient than is generally allowed, and their value in aiding to determine questions of ecclesiastical antiquity is clearly very great. At the same time we presume that there is hardly any one who would for a moment countenance the extravagant theory of Whiston, a theory

which is *prima facie* so vain and absurd, that we can scarcely understand how he could have been in earnest in advocating it. To the ecclesiastical antiquary as well as historian, the volume is in some respects invaluable, and Dr. Chase has so well performed his labor in revising the version of the learned Cambridge professor, that it cannot but find a place in every well arranged theological and historical library. Of the Essay which Dr. Chase has translated and subjoined, it would be difficult to speak in sufficiently high terms within the compass of a brief notice like the present. It abounds in learning; is candid, full, and impartial in presenting authorities, and though, as a matter of course, at times expressing opinions on which the learned have been and continue to be divided, with greater decision than we should feel at liberty to use, yet still it is so logical, clear, precise, and able, that we venture to assert that in no existing volume can there be found so great an amount of matter relative to the Constitutions and Canons, their history, contents, use, and importance, as in this excellent Essay, which comprises fully half of the volume before us. We doubt not the theological world will feel itself under special obligations to Dr. Chase for his labors in this department. It may seem superfluous, but we must take occasion to say that the mechanical execution is in the best style of art.

Musical Review.

IN adding this department to our paper, we accomplish one of the objects which we have long steadily held in view. Music will at no distant day be considered an indispensable part of the education of our youth; and thoroughly convinced of its importance, and of the beneficial effects which follow upon its cultivation, we purpose to aid as far as we can in the formation of a sound taste and a just appreciation of the art. At starting, a few words of explanation may be necessary. Newspaper discussions have led us to surmise, and occasional rumors have not tended to disarm our suspicions, that there exist party feelings, and heartburnings, and factions of strange discord in the field on which we are about to enter. We neither know nor care to know the party watchwords and distinctions; we have no desire to mediate between the contending factions, or to espouse any opinions merely because they enjoy a temporary ascendancy: and we mean to speak of the productions in this branch of art after our own sovereign will and pleasure, and according to the dictates of our own judgment. We are not bound exclusively to any school, or age, or style; we do not quarrel with Beethoven because he never wrote a Polka, nor with Strauss because he never aspired to an Oratorio. We are prepared to recognise the merits, and reject the defects of all, judging each by its appropriate standard. The well-known process of the old Greek "knight of the road," notwithstanding its simplicity, is not to our taste. As with musical publications so with musical performances, which we intend shortly to take up: the same principles shall regulate our course. In short, whenever we find truthful interpretations of the various feelings and emotions of the human heart, no matter from what source they proceed, we shall not hesitate to signify our approbation; nor on the other hand shall the truth be withheld, if we find that the composer or performer has failed in his attempt, or endeavors to substitute idle display and physical dexterity for genuine music.

Beauties of the Opera, Nos. 1 to 7. Joseph F. Atwill, 201 Broadway.

THE periodical form of publication has been

frequently adopted by music publishers, though, generally speaking, not with so much success as has attended it under the auspices of the book-sellers. This must be attributed, however, not to any want of merit in the compositions themselves, or to deficiencies of taste and judgment on the part of the editors, but to various causes arising from the very nature of music itself. To these we will not now more particularly refer; but turn to the Miscellany which has elicited these remarks. Selecting the choicest portions of such operas as are being represented in Europe or America, the editor presents them arranged for the pianoforte in as easy a style as is compatible with a proper degree of effect, and thus renders them capable of being performed with satisfaction without the necessity of laborious practice. On turning over the numbers, we find songs rendered famous by Pico, Tedesco, Madame Bishop, several of Jenny Lind's, and also a variety of marches, polkas, pot-pourris, &c., elegantly got up, accompanied with engravings of the above-named singers; altogether fulfilling the promise held forth in the prospectus, and implied in the title. Those who distrust their own judgment, or who wish to know something of the music that may be all the rage for the time being, and desire to study economy, cannot do better than avail themselves of this miscellany.

The February Number is just published, embellished with a likeness of Signorina Truffi, in the character of Lucrezia Borgia, and containing the Finale *M'odi ah m'odi*—Hear, oh hear me, from Lucrezia, *Alfin son tua*, from Lucia di Lammermoor, *Moonlight on the Lake*, by Hon. Leander Star, and the Wedding chorus, from Lucia.

Le Retour au Chalet. Par François Hünten. Wm. Dubois, 315 Broadway.

Bolero sur l'Opera "Ne Touchez pas à la Reine." Par François Hünten. Wm. Dubois.

The first of these pieces is a simple melody, with an Introduction and Variations. The Introduction and Air we prefer to the rest; and though we have no great liking for this form of presenting musical ideas, we must, in justice, observe that the Variations, without making any pretension, are very effective, and preserve the theme well throughout.

The *Bolero* is a piece of greater merit; it is a light, lively composition, well put together, with some very pleasing modulation. The air coming up in the bass, on the return to the original key, has a good effect.

Both pieces can easily be executed by the generality of performers. We cannot lay them down without commenting upon their style of getting up. The notes stand out distinctly; no ugly crowding distorts the page or perplexes the eye; all can be read at a glance. The neat, unpretending covers, have quite a foreign air.

Songs for the People, No. II., February. Pp. 48. Price 25 cents. Philadelphia: G. B. Zieber & Co.

A LITTLE publication intended to embody American Music and Poetry, with a selection of the best songs of all nations. It is in a portable form, and the vocal score of each song is brought within the average compass of voices. An instrumental accompaniment is occasionally added. The pages are profusely illustrated with wood engravings, much better executed than might be supposed from the price. We notice, however, a slight slip of the artist, affecting the pendant of the ship on p. 69; it has apparently a breeze of its own to go by. There are several standard songs in this No. *Black-Eyed Susan*, *Rory O'More*, *The Heaving of the Lead*, &c., and if the selections continue to be made with the same judgment, the work cannot fail to meet with a ready sale. We welcome every effort to extend and improve in the people a taste for music.

Millet, 329 Broadway, announces for immediate publication—*Quadrilles from Ernani*, by Julien; *Valse à Cinque Temps*, by Pagni; and *The Word of God*, by Wetmore.

Foreign Literary Intelligence.

MR. FOX TALBOT has published in the *London Literary Gazette* of Jan. 1, a reply to the late review in the *London Quarterly* of his "English Etymologies." The editor professes himself convinced of the soundness of Mr. Talbot's deductions and conjectures.

The Hakluyt Society have just issued "The Observations of Sir Richard Hawkins, Bart., in his Voyage into the South Seas, in the year 1593," from the edition of 1622. This work is peculiarly interesting at the present period, after the late English and American expeditions in the same regions.

The *Sydney Herald* of Aug. 7, announces that Dr. Leichhardt and party have been compelled to return to Darling Downs, most of their cattle having become so wild that it was impossible to keep them together. Dr. Leichhardt himself was once eighteen days absent from the camp, and was given up for lost. It will be recollected that Dr. L. had started on this journey into the interior with every prospect of succeeding even better than on his first expedition, and the untoward termination of his attempt will be much regretted.

Two Esquimaux have recently been brought to England, from the British Territories near Baffin's Bay, by a whaler. The pair, who are a young married couple, of small stature, the husband seventeen, and the wife fifteen years of age, have been exhibited and lectured upon in various parts of the county, with the view of exciting the public sympathy on their behalf, and in favor of their tribe, which is represented to be in a miserable condition. The chief want is said to be that of fire-arms, to enable them to procure an abundant supply of food.

We regret to have to announce the death of Finn Magnussen, whose name, as one of the greatest archaeologists of the north, is well known in Europe; he was learned in the old Icelandic literature, and the general literature of Scandinavia, where he was a member of several learned societies. He had been in a weak state of health for some time, and died on the 24th December, in his 66th year.

The eulogium on the lately deceased sister of the King of the French, which appeared in the *Journal des Debats*, is attributed to M. Guizot.

The Rev. David Trumbull, English chaplain at Valparaiso, has started there an English newspaper, called the "Neighbor."

Mr. Bentley announced for publication in January, "The History of Auricular Confession," by Count C. P. de Lasteyrie, translated by C. Cocks, B. L., 2 vols. post 8vo. "Switzerland in 1847: with an Account of its Condition before the War," by T. Mugge, edited by Mrs. Percy Sinnett, 2 vols. post 8vo. "Five Years in China; from 1842 to 1847, with an Account of the Occupation of the Island of Labuan and the Island of Borneo by Her Majesty's Forces," by Capt. Forbes, R.N., 8vo., with plates. "Rambles in the Romantic Parts of the Hartz Mountains," by Hans Christian Andersen, translated by Charles Beckwith, post 8vo., 10s. 6d. Mrs. Howitt's New Novel, "The Peasant and his Landlord," 2 vols. post 8vo.

Longman & Co. have nearly ready, Colonel Mitchell's Tour in Tropical Australia.

Publishers' Circular.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Messrs. WILEY & PUTNAM have recently issued, "Compend of the Phreno-Philosophy of Human Nature," by J. Stanley Grimes, Counsellor at Law, formerly President of the Western Phrenological Society; Professor of Medical Jurisprudence in the Charleston Medical College; author of *Etherology*, &c., &c.

Messrs. WILLIAMS & BROTHERS have just issued a novel by Alexander Dumas, entitled "Twenty Years After," sequel to the *Musketeers*.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.—In accordance with the notice in the concluding number of our second volume, we continue "The Literary World" to all parties who have not notified us to the contrary; therefore, all who receive this first number of the third volume, are considered subscribers, and will be charged as such. All who are desirous of completing their files, should apply immediately for back numbers, as there are but few on hand. Our readers (from many of whom on the renewal of their subscriptions, we have received the highest compliments) can materially further the interests of this paper by expressing their opinions relative to the work, and exerting their influence with their friends to procure subscribers to it. Should each subscriber send a name or two, the Publishers would then fully realize that success which has been so kindly desired.

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